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... This paper has enlisted
with the government in the
cause of America for the
period of the war

THE DUTCH SHIP.

All Dutch shipping in American
waters was taken over by a Presi-
dential proclamation yesterday morn-
ing. The order was made Wednes-
day night, the morning papers scor-
ing a big scoop in one of the most
important happenings of the year.

Holland had refused the American
ultimatum for a transfer of the ships
according to the original agreement
which Germany blocked. All Dutch
shipping in British waters is being
renationalized simultaneously.

Approximately 77 vessels with a
tonnage estimated as high as 600,000
have been added to the American
merchant marine. The ships in the
British waters will add another 300,
000 or 400,000 tons to the allied mer-
chant fleet.

President Wilson's proclamation
constitutes another of his strongest
papers. After reviewing the negotia-
tions that finally failed he conclud-
ed as follows:

"On March 7, through Great Brit-
tain, a final proposal expiring on the
18th was submitted to Holland. A
reply has been received, which while
in itself unaccepted, might under
other conditions have served as a
basis for further negotiations. But
the events to which I have alluded
have served to demonstrate conclusively
that we have been attempting
to negotiate where the essential
basis for an agreement, namely, the
meeting for free wills, is absent.
Even were an agreement concluded
there is lacking that power of in-
dependent action which alone can
assure performance.

"I say this not in criticism of the
Dutch government. I profoundly
sympathize with the difficulty of her
position under the menace of a mili-
tary power which has in every way
demonstrated its disdain of neutral
right, but since coercion does in fact
exist, no alternative is left to us but
to accomplish through the exercise
of our indisputable rights as a sov-
ereign, that which is so reasonable
that in other circumstances, we could
be confident of achieving it by agree-
ment.

"Steps are being taken to put into
our service Dutch shipping within
our territorial jurisdiction. This ac-
tion which is being taken by govern-
ments associated with us, leaves to
Holland ample tonnage for her do-
mestic and colonial needs. We have
informed the Dutch government that
her colonial trade will be facilitated
and that she may at once send ships
from Holland to secure the broad
cereals which her people require.
These ships will be freely bunkered
and will be immune from detention
on our part. The liner New Amster-
dam which came within our jurisdic-
tion under an agreement for her re-
turn, will, of course, be permitted
to return to Holland. Not
only so but she will be authorized
to carry back with her the two car-
goes of foodstuffs which Holland
would have secured under the tem-
porary charter agreement, had not
Germany prevented. Ample compensa-
tion will be paid to the Dutch own-
ers of ships which will be put into our
service and suitable provision will be
made to prevent the possibility of
ships being lost through enemy ac-
tion.

"It is our earnest desire to safe-
guard to the fullest extent the in-
terests of Holland and of her nation-
als. By exercising in this crisis our
admitted right to control all property
within our territory we do no wrong
to Holland. The manner in which we
proposed to exercise this right
and our proposals made to Holland
concurrently therewith cannot, I be-
lieve, fail to evidence to Holland
the sincerity of our friendship to-
ward her."

"Over the Top"

By An American Soldier
Who Went

ARTHUR GUY EMPEY
Machine Gunner Serving in France

(Copyright, 1915, by Arthur Guy Empey)

CHAPTER XVII.

Out in Front.

After ten Lieutenant Stores of our
section came into the dugout and in-
formed me that I was "for" a recon-
noitering patrol and would carry six Mills
bombs.

At 11:30 that night twelve men, our
Lieutenant and myself went out in
front on a patrol in No Man's Land.

We crawled around in the dark for
about two hours, just knocking about
looking for trouble, on the lookout for
Boche working parties to see what
they were doing.

Around two in the morning we were
carefully picking our way about thirty
yards in front of the German barbed
wire, when we walked into a Boche
covering party nearly thirty strong.
Then the inside started, the soldier re-
ndered his bill, and we paid.

Fighting in the dark with a bayonet
is not very pleasant. The Germans
took it on the run, but our officer was
no novice at the game and didn't fol-
low them. He gave the order "down
on the ground, hug it close."

Just in time, too, because a volley
skipped over our heads. Then in low
tones we were told to separate and
crawl back to our trenches, each man
on his own.

We could see the flashes of their
rifles in the darkness, but the bullets
were going over our heads.

We lost three men killed and one
wounded in the arm. If it hadn't been
for our officer's quick thinking the
whole patrol would have probably
been wiped out.

After about twenty minutes' wait we
went out again and discovered that
the Germans had a wiring party work-
ing on their barbed wire. We returned
to our trenches unobserved with the
information and our machine guns im-
mediately got busy.

The next night four men were sent
out to go over and examine the Ger-
man barbed wire and see if they had



A Hidden Gun.

cut lines through it; if so, this pre-
saged an early morning attack on our
trenches.

Of course I had to be one of the four
selected for the job. It was just like
sending a fellow to the undertaker's
to order his own coffin.

At ten o'clock we started out, armed
with three bombs, a bayonet and re-
volver. After getting into No Man's
Land we separated. Crawling four or
five feet at a time, ducking star shells,
with strays cracking overhead, I
reached their wire, I scouted along
this inch by inch, scarcely breathing.
I could hear their talking in their
trench, my heart was pounding against
my ribs. One false move or the least
noise from me meant discovery and
almost certain death.

After covering my sector I quietly
crawled back. I had gotten about half
way when I noticed that my revolver
was missing. It was pitch dark. I
turned about to see if I could find it;
it couldn't be far away, because about
three or four minutes previously I had
felt the butt in the holster. I crawled
around in circles and at last found it,
then started on my way back to our
trenches, as I thought.

Pretty soon I reached barbed wire,
and was just going to give the pass-
word when something told me not to.
I put out my hand and touched one of
the barbed wire stakes. It was iron.
The British are of wood, while the
German are iron. My heart stopped
beating; by mistake I had crawled
back to the German lines.

I turned slowly about and my taste
caught on the wire and made a loud
ripping noise.

A sharp challenge rang out. I
sprang to my feet, ducking low, and
ran madly back toward our lines. The
Germans started firing. The bullets
were biting all around me, when bang!
I ran smash into our wire, and a sharp
challenge. "Ali, who comes there?"

rang out. I gasped out the password,
and, groping my way through the lane
in the wire, tearing my hands and
uniform, I tumbled into our trench and
was safe, but I was a nervous wreck
for an hour, until a drink of rum
brought me round.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Staged Under Fire.

Three days after the incident just re-
lated our company was relieved from
the front line and carried. We stayed
in reserve billets for about two weeks
when we received the welcome news
that our division would go back of the
line "to rest billets." We would re-
main in these billets for at least two
months, this in order to be restored to
our full strength by drafts of recruits
from Blighty.

Everyone was happy and contented
at these tidings; all you could hear
around the billets was whistling and
singing. The day after the receipt of
the order we hiked for five days, mak-
ing an average of about twelve miles
per day until we arrived at the small
town of O—.

It took us about three days to get
settled, and from then on our cushy
time started. We would parade from
8:45 in the morning until 12 noon.
Then except for an occasional billet
or brigade guard we were on our own.
For the first four or five afternoons I
spent my time in bringing up to date
my neglected correspondence.

Tommy loves to be amused, and be-
ing a Yankee, they turned to me for
something new in this line. I taught
them how to pitch horseshoes, and this
game made a great hit for about ten
days. Then Tommy turned to Ameri-
can for a new diversion. I was up in
the air until a happy thought came to
me. Why not write a sketch and break
Tommy in as an actor?

One evening after "lights out," when
you are not supposed to talk, I imparted
my scheme in whispers to the section.
They eagerly accepted the idea
(forming a stock company and



Preparing the "Chow."

could hardly wait until the morning
for further details.

After parade, the next afternoon I
was almost mobbed. Everyone in the
section wanted a part in the proposed
sketch. When I informed them that it
would take at least ten days of hard
work to write the plot, they were bit-
terly disappointed. I immediately got
busy, made a desk out of biscuit tins
in the corner of the billet, and put up
a sign "Empey & Wallace Theatrical
Co." About twenty of the section,
upon reading this sign, immediately
applied for the position of office boy.
I accepted the twenty applicants, and
sent them on scouting parties through-
out the deserted French village. These
parties were to search all the attics for
discarded civilian clothes, and any-
thing that we could use in the props
of our proposed company.

About five that night they returned
covered with grime and dust, but load-
ed down with a miscellaneous assort-
ment of everything under the sun.
They must have thought that I was
going to start a department store, judg-
ing from the different things they
brought back from their pillage.

After eight days' constant writing I
completed a two-act farce comedy
which I called "The Diamond Palace
Saloon." Upon the suggestion of one
of the boys in the section I sent a proof
of the program to a printing house in
London. Then I assigned the different
parts and started rehearsing. David
Belasco would have thrown up his
hands in despair at the material which
I had to use. Just imagine trying to
teach a Tommy, with a strong cockney
accent, to impersonate a flowery tough
or a Southern negro.

Adjacent to our billet was an open
field. We got busy at one end of it and
constructed a stage. We secured the
lumber for the stage by demolishing
an old wooden shack in the rear of
our billet.

The first scene was supposed to rep-
resent a street on the Bowery in New
York, while the scene of the second
act was the interior of the Diamond
Palace saloon, also on the Bowery.

In the play I took the part of Abo
Switch, a farmer, who had come from
Pumpkinville Center, Tenn., to make
his first visit to New York.

In the first scene Abo Switch meets
the proprietor of the Diamond Palace
saloon, a ramshackle affair which the
owner was a financial loss.

The proprietor's name was Tom
Twistum, his bartender being named
Fillum Up.

After meeting Abo, Tom and Fillum
Up persuaded him to buy the wine,
praising it to the skies and telling
wondrous tales of the money taken
over the bar.

While they are talking, an old Jew

named Ike Cohenstein comes along,
and Abo suggests him for cashier. After
coaxing, Ike they meet an old
Southern negro called Samba, and
upon the suggestion of Ike he is en-
gaged as porter. Then the three of
them, arm in arm, leave to take pos-
session of this wonderful palace which
Abo has just paid \$5,000 for. (Car-
tain.)

In the second act the curtain rises
on the interior of the Diamond Palace
saloon, and the audience gets its first
shock. The saloon looks like a pig-
pen, two tramps lying drunk on the
floor, and the bartender in a dirty
shirt with his sleeves rolled up, asleep
with his head on the bar.

Enter Abo, Samba and Ike, and the
fun commences.

One of the characters in the second
act was named Broadway Kate, and I
had an awful job to break in one of
the Tommies to act and talk like a
woman.

Another character was Alkali Ike, an
Arizona cowboy, who just before the
close of the play comes into the saloon
and wrecks it with his revolver.

We had eleven three-hour rehearsals
before I thought it advisable to pre-
sent the sketch to the public.

The whole brigade was crazy to
witness the first performance. This
performance was scheduled for Friday
night and everyone was full of antici-
pation; when bang! orders came
through that the brigade would move at
two that afternoon. Cursing and
blinding was the order of things upon
the receipt of this order, but we
moved.

That night we reached the little vil-
lage of S— and again went into rest
billetts. We were to be there two
weeks. Our company immediately got
busy and scoured the village for a
suitable place in which to present our
production. Then we received another
shock.

A rival company was already estab-
lished in the village. They called

commodating four people, and these
we immediately sold out. Then a
brilliant idea came to Ike Cohenstein.
Why not use the rafters overhead, call
them boxes and charge two francs for
a seat on these? The only difficulty
was how were the men to reach these
boxes, but to Ike this was a mere de-
tail.

He got long ropes and tied one end
around each rafter and then tied a lot
of knots in the ropes. These ropes
would take the place of stairways.

We figured out that the rafters
would seat about forty men and sold
that number of tickets accordingly.

When the ticketholders for the boxes
got a glimpse of the rafters and were
informed that they had to use the rope
stairway, there was a howl of indigna-
tion, but we had their money and told
them that if they did not like it they
could write to the management later
and their money would be refunded;
but under these conditions they would
not be allowed to witness the perfor-
mance that night.

After a little grousing they accepted
the situation with the promise that if
the show was rotten they certainly
would let us know about it during the
performance.

Everything went lovely and it was a
howling success, until Alkali Ike ap-
peared on the scene with his revolver
loaded with blank cartridges. Behind
the bar on a shelf was a long line of
bottles. Alkali Ike was supposed to
start on the left of this line and break
six of the bottles by firing at them with
his revolver. Behind these bottles was
a piece of painted canvas was supposed
to represent the back of the bar, at
each shot from Alkali's pistol a man
behind the scenes would hit one of the
bottles with his entrenching tool
handle and smash it, to give the im-
pression that Alkali was a good shot.

Alkali Ike started in and aimed at
the right of the line of bottles instead
of the left, and the poor boob behind
the scenes started breaking the bottles
on the left, and then the boxholders
turned loose; but outside of this little
fiasco the performance was a huge suc-
cess, and we decided to run it for a
week.

New troops were constantly coming
through, and for six performances we
had the "S. R. O." sign suspended out-
side.

(Continued.)

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